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FINANCES.

Our finances are in better shape than for
some time. We will start this year with larger
general funds than last year. Our relief fund is
considerably augmented. We have now nearly
\$300 in that fund controlled by a board of trustees.
The Lodges have responded fairly well to the
request of Grand Lodge made last year. Three
or four Lodges have not contributed anything up
to the present, but this fund is sure to grow, and
whatever the views of some may be in regard to it,
great benefits may be derived from it in the
future.

MEMBERSHIP.

Our membership has not materially increased
this year, and yet we are holding our own. Consid-
ering the facts that many of our young men are
moving from time to time to the western parts of
the continent, that there are other societies vig-
orously canvassing for members, some of them by
paid agencies, we are surprised that we hold our
own. We do not canvass. It is contrary to the spirit
of Masonry. We are supposed to be attractive
enough to draw good men to us. In view of that
fact, brethren, are we careful enough in our ballots?
Brethren the ballot box is the safeguard of our
fraternity. If you want to ruin masonry, be careless
in your ballots. I think it is an important matter
that when a candidate for Masonry is to be ballot-
ed for his name should be mentioned in the notice
of meeting and every brother be notified. I notice
that degrees have been conferred upon Entered
Apprentices from other Jurisdictions upon request
of the Lodge initiating without reference to the
Grand Lodge from which the brother comes. This
should never be done without a certificate from
the Grand Secretary of the Jurisdiction to which
he belongs, that the Lodge is in good standing and
that the fees have been paid, otherwise the fees for